



Children's Health Protection. American Heritage Rivers Initiative is launched to help communities restore and revitalize waters together to fulfill the goal of fishable and swimmable waters for all Americans. Underground storage tanks must meet strict

FUTURE CHALLENGES

We've Still Got a Long Way to Go

In the past 30 years, a basic American equation has changed. Prosperity does not equal high levels of pollution. We have the strongest economy in history while setting even tougher standards to protect human health and the environment. We have learned that pollution prevention pays. Investments in new technology to improve the quality of our air, water and land have returned substantial cost benefits in both health and productivity. This trend continues under pressure from a growing population's increasing demand for energy.

EPA has progressed from reducing immediate human health threats to improving human and ecological health. The agency's direction is long-term habitability and global sustainability. Many of the obvious, visible sources of pollution are largely under control, but pollution from past years still must be cleaned up, and many subtler pollution problems are equally pernicious. We also are moving to control pollution from smaller businesses and runoff, which cumulatively causes environmental and health problems.

In the mid-Atlantic states and across the country, the foreseeable future challenges include urban sprawl,

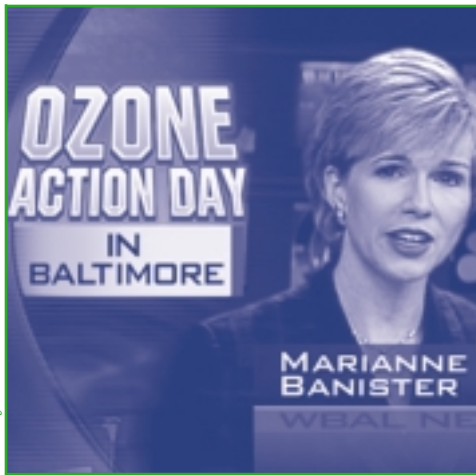
the essential need for safe food, protecting low-income communities living near heavy industrial areas, the invisible menace of pesticides and toxics, and erratic climate change.

Acidification is a regional challenge which impacts 4,500 miles of streams. Acidification comes from two sources, abandoned coal mines and sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides in the air, primarily power plants. It destroys aquatic life and degrades water quality. EPA has a goal to reduce 150 miles of acidified streams a year. This will take cooperation and collaboration with our state partners, many agencies and organizations.

Land use in the mid-Atlantic states has changed dramatically in the past century. The region has become a victim of urban sprawl. There are more paved surfaces and less forests, especially in the western rural communities. These trends result in polluted natural resources and increased flooding, human diseases, and loss of recreational opportunities. As sprawl continues, there will be further increases in runoff of pollutants, forest fragmentation, habitat loss in streams, and a use of vast amounts of energy.

Two recent reports, *The Ecological Assessment of the mid-Atlantic Region's Landscape Atlas* and the *Condition of the mid-Atlantic Estuaries*, describe these trends. The reports were produced by the mid-Atlantic Integrated Assessment program, an interagency consortium. They demonstrate EPA's new role in integrating and analyzing complex data. EPA is also providing more high quality scientific analyses and real-time data about the condition of the environment. These are important tools for scientists and decision makers to take on future challenges, including those brought about by land use changes.

Courtesy of WBAL - TV



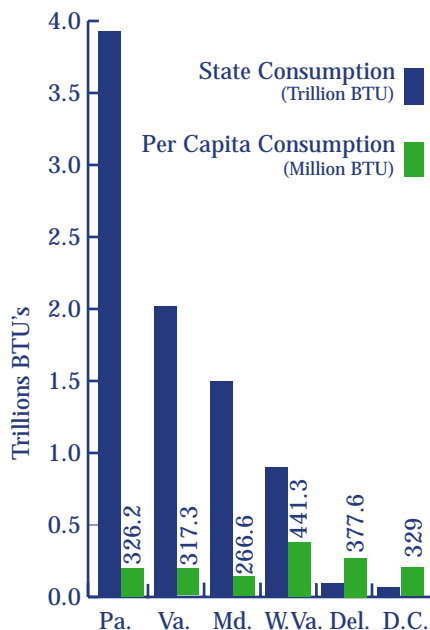
Although we have had significantly fewer ozone action days over the past ten years, our challenge is that ozone alerts are occurring in areas that are getting larger and larger, primarily due to uncontrolled growth.

wiser energy use. Preserving lands, building livable communities, and reducing global climate change begins one person at a time, one family at a time, one community at a time.

At home, families can reduce pollution and save money by conserving electricity, using public transportation and restricting the number of auto miles driven. There will be further reductions with a properly maintained, fuel-efficient car which can slow the spread of ozone-smog.

Citizens can help minimize the negative impacts of landscape changes by getting involved with local organizations that monitor land management and manage growth by improving existing roads and schools instead of

West Virginia Has The Highest Per Capita Energy Consumption



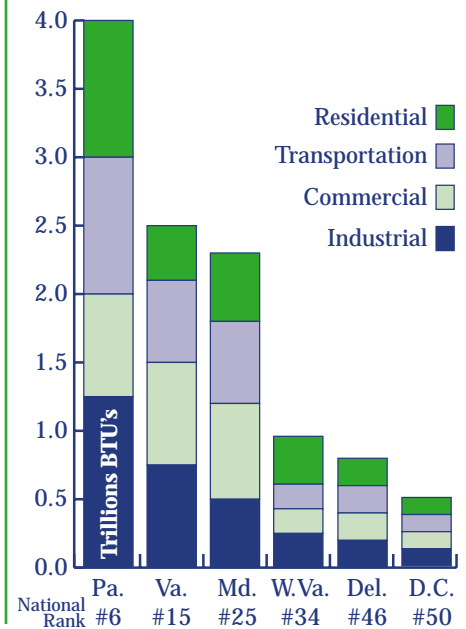
Above is total energy use per capita, sources are shown in chart on the right

EPA has designed a score of voluntary programs where business, industry and institutions can partner with EPA to prevent pollution. These include, Waste Minimization, Project XL, Waste WiSe, Energy Star™, Water Alliances for Voluntary Efficiency, and many other programs.

These voluntary programs help businesses reduce waste and energy use, resulting in significant cost savings and reductions in pollutants and toxic emissions. Although not a complete solution, increasing participation in these programs are essential to curb global climate change, ozone smog, and other environmental challenges.

America needs smart growth, sustainable development and

Pennsylvania Leads in Total Energy Consumption



Superfund completion. The Environmental Science Center opens at Fort Meade, Md., featuring green building or half of all site cleanups are completed. Radon testing is required to buy a home in most states. Occupants living in pre-

building new infrastructure. Planting trees, especially near waterways, reduces non-point source pollution runoff.

An entire industry has been created to meet today's environmental challenge by solving problems left from our industrial and agricultural heritage. Hundreds of thousands of people now work in environmental protection and technology in the private and non-profit sectors and in federal, state and local governments. This new environmental industry includes scientists, physicians, engineers, technicians,

journalists, researchers, and policy makers; and educators in schools, nature centers and businesses. Colleges and universities offer courses and degrees in environmental law, business, science, engineering, and communications. Experts assess, communicate, and manage environmental risk. Non-profit organizations focus on areas of environmental concern.

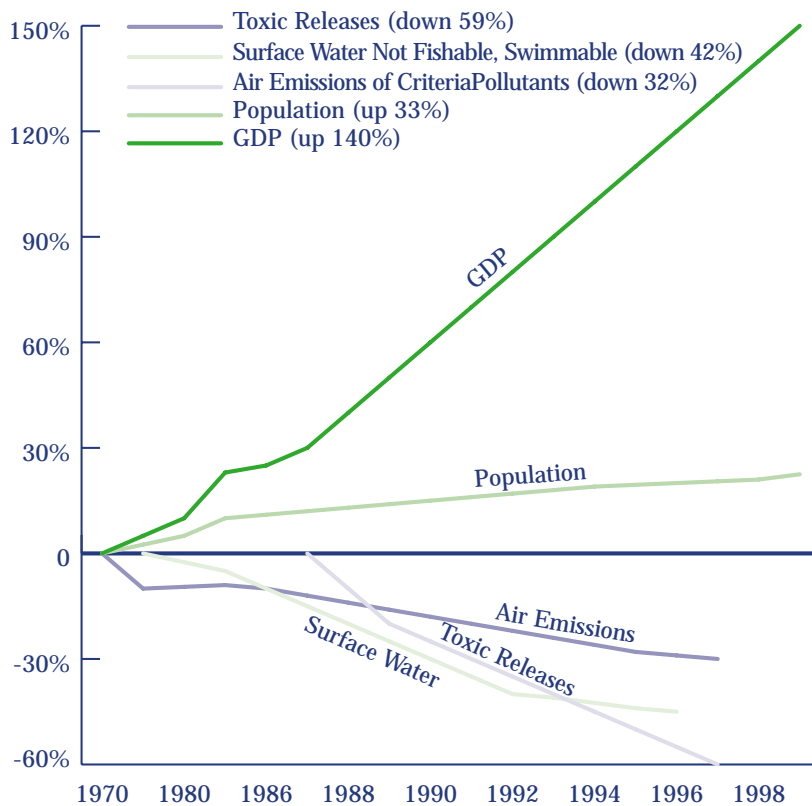
In the mix of growth and change, government's role has expanded as well. EPA maintains its traditional and important role in setting

Courtesy of Keep America Beautiful, Inc.



Many baby-boomers remember this image as a symbol of how our environment has suffered and how it's our responsibility to protect the earth.

National Environmental Improvements/Economics and Population Growth



standards and enforcing laws so that polluters will pay the penalty for not meeting their environmental responsibility. However, the agency just as often is a collaborative partner and regulator, sharing resources, data, and other environmental expertise.

Continued use of sound science is essential to deal with many of the 21st Century's pollution problems, that will most likely be more insidious, more complicated, and pose even greater challenges to our scientific and business leaders.

Our nation can, and must face the tomorrow's challenges to protect human health and the environment and create communities free from toxic wastes, with healthful air quality, restored rivers, lakes and streams, and healthy children.